

# Amazing Place *Family* Album



*New participant and artist Helen M works on a drawing in the garden*



*Karen F. and Matilde O. with a speaker from the Texas Genealogical Society on How to Dress Like a Southern Belle*



*Bobby Ann P. works on counting coins for the Change for Living Water project*



*Sally S. and Beverly H. work on a community art project that will decorate a First Ward wall*



*Wade S. at the Cinco de Mayo festivities*



# Family Spirit

DEMENTIA DAY PROGRAM • CAREGIVER SUPPORT • COMMUNITY EDUCATION

MONTHLY NEWS AND PROGRAM CALENDAR

## When Sadness is More Than Sad

*by* Brianna Garrison, MSW, LCSW

It is not unusual for caregivers to develop depression. In fact, caregivers that provide care for someone with dementia are twice as likely to suffer from depression. Caregivers often sacrifice their own physical and emotional needs. The resulting feelings of anger, anxiety, sadness, isolation, exhaustion—and then, guilt, for having these feelings—can take a heavy toll.

Everyone has negative feelings that come and go over time; but when these feelings become overwhelming or when those negative feelings are unrelenting it may be a warning sign of depression. Unfortunately, feelings of depression are often seen as a sign of weakness rather than as a sign that something is out of balance.

People experience depression in diverse ways. Knowing what is normal for you is essential. These are common symptoms of depression. Have you experienced any of the following for **longer than two weeks**?

- Appetite changes resulting in unwanted weight gain or loss
- A change in sleep patterns
- Fatigue/loss of energy
- A loss of pleasure in previously enjoyed activities or relationships
- Becoming easily agitated or angered
- Decreased concentration or difficulty with decision making
- Low self-esteem or increased negative self-talk
- Ongoing physical symptoms such as headaches, digestive disorders and chronic pain
- Thoughts of death or suicide, or attempting suicide

Depression deserves to be treated with the same attention afforded any other illness, such as diabetes or high blood pressure. The important thing is to seek help.

- 1) Contact your physician and schedule a physical examination.
- 2) Meet with a mental health professional such as a psychiatrist, psychologist, or social worker.
- 3) Discuss the possibility for anti-depressant medications

There are many things we can do to prevent and manage depression. Depression is not a sign of weakness; it is a medical condition with treatments available. Here are a few recommendations for dealing with depression:

- Set realistic goals;
- Break large tasks into small ones;
- Participate in activities that may make you feel better;
- Expect your mood to improve gradually, not immediately;
- Let your family and friends help you.



*Brianna Garrison*

For more photos, go to Facebook or [www.amazingplacehouston.org/news](http://www.amazingplacehouston.org/news)

**Most important, recognize the signs for depression and seek help.**